

Firms Linked to Putin Classmate Win \$1.5Bln in Moscow School Meal Contracts, Report Says

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Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency

Four companies linked to a former university classmate of President Vladimir Putin won all 39 contracts to supply meals to Moscow schools from 2026 to 2028, the exiled news outlet Vyorstka [reported](#) Wednesday.

The awards, worth a combined 126.7 billion rubles (\$1.5 billion), show how a lucrative school catering business once held by companies owned by late Wagner mercenary group founder Yevgeny Prigozhin has passed to firms with ties to Ilgam Ragimov, who studied law alongside Putin.

The four winning companies were registered in March 2024, less than a year after Prigozhin's mutiny and death in a plane crash. Vyorstka reported that their owners, Sergei Yefimchuk, Nikolai Kuznetsov, Dmitry Aliyev and Olga Rusishvili, had previously worked at Grandtitul, a company in which Ragimov is the largest shareholder.

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Verona Kapital won 12 contracts worth 38.2 billion rubles (\$450.8 million), KDP won seven worth 29.1 billion rubles (\$343.4 million), RSK won nine worth 34.8 billion rubles (\$410.6 million) and ShYuZ won 11 worth 24.6 billion rubles (\$290.3 million), according to Vyorstka.

The four firms succeeded suppliers called Verona, Kombinat Doshkolnogo Pitaniya, Russotskapital and Shkolnik-Yuz, which had been owned by Prigozhin, the outlet reported.

Ragimov studied with Putin at Leningrad State University, now St. Petersburg State University. Forbes estimated his fortune at \$500 million in 2014, citing business interests that included Moscow’s Sadovod market, the Ukraina hotel and the Evropeisky and Panorama shopping centers.

The late Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny’s Anti-Corruption Foundation has [said](#) that Ragimov and two other Putin classmates helped finance a lavish property near the Black Sea town of Gelendzhik that the group links to the Russian president. It said their company, Investment Solutions, spent 7 billion rubles (\$82.6 million) on the project.

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